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done during times of excitement, such as we have just passed through. A society which did nothing except on such occasions, and then rushed about in a paroxysm of effort, would be unworthy of the name of peace society. The purpose of such societies is not so much to try to prevent war in specific cases, however efficient they may then be, as to bring about such a change in public sentiment in reference to the whole subject of war and the methods of administering international justice as will ultimately render all war impossible. This is the great field of their service, — to promote better international feeling in a large general way; to inculcate the idea that war is a barbarous and irrational means of trying to secure justice; to induce governments to settle by arbitration all cases of dispute as they arise; to promote the negotiation of permanent treaties of arbitration between nations; and to try to secure the ultimate establishment of a permanent international tribunal to which all cases of international difference, not adjustable by diplomacy, may go as a matter of course.

It is evident that but little of this work can be done when the public mind is in a state of frenzy and suspense. It requires the patient labor of months and years, when men's minds are free from passion and open to truth. It is but slowly at best that the bad instincts and habits of thought and belief inherited from the past and strengthened by false education can be changed.

The American Peace Society, with others, has great reason to rejoice that its effects have had already such large fruitage. The change of view with regard to war and the possibility of its abolition, since the Society was founded just *seventy* years ago (*eighty-three* years ago if the life of its immediate predecessors be included), has been enormous. During these years, in dark days and bright, the Society has faithfully worked away at its problem. It has circulated many millions of pages of literature discussing all phases of the subject, seeking to turn public opinion into better channels. Many of the most eminent men in the nation have coöperated with it, speaking for it and writing for it. It has gone to the government authorities year after year with its appeals for the settlement of disputes with other nations by peaceful means, for the negotiation of permanent treaties to this end, etc. It has seen its proposed methods adopted in many

cases of dispute. It has seen a great change in public opinion. It has been joined in its propaganda by other societies (now over 400), in all the civilized nations. It has seen many great and small organizations, not specifically devoted to peace, making the subject a part of their program. During the present excitement and intensity of feeling over the destruction of the battleship *Maine*, and over the general Cuban question, it has seen a strong conservative feeling, both at Washington and throughout the nation, opposing the cheap and vulgar jingo ravings and the lying abominations of the sensational papers, and holding back the country from plunging rashly into war.

The Society can justly claim that through its faithful work in the past it has been one of the chief instrumentalities in producing this large conservative, restraining sentiment throughout the nation. Whatever may be the outcome of the present crisis, the Society will go steadily on, in season out of season, propagating its principles and declaring its policies. Its members have an unfaltering faith in their ultimate and not very remote success. The great movement for permanent international peace, the idea of which has in recent years so deeply taken hold of men's minds, will be little retarded by any war that may come. It has gone steadily on increasing yearly in momentum in spite of the wars which have made the pages of this century so bloody. The Society proposes, with the help of God, to continue its efforts until the movement is consummated in the setting up of a great international court and the banishing of war from human society. It asks the immediate and continued coöperation and support of all the men and women throughout the nation who share its aspirations and its hopes.

The Crime of the Sensational Journals.

A decent, self-respecting man can hardly allow himself to speak, or even to think, of the course pursued by many of the newspapers of the country during the past six weeks. The temptation to think bitter thoughts and to speak over-hard words about them, in the name of righteousness, is so great that about the only safe thing to do is to bite one's lips and keep still. However, their crime has been too great to be passed over in silence.

We have never had before in the history of the country such an exhibition of rumor-mongering as

followed the destruction of the "Maine" in Havana harbor. Not that the spirit of it has been worse than often before, but the perfection of the press system made it possible on this occasion on a scale which would have brought chills to the consciences of the earlier experts in the art of news-fabrication. Taking advantage of the fact that everybody was eager to know all about the disaster and the progress of its investigation, many of the "yellow" sheets caught up every rumor, from any chance comer, and sent it out, with the most flaming headlines, as if it had been as true as the explosion itself. This was somewhat excusable at first. But they continued to do so week after week, in face of the fact that the investigating Committee were doing their work in secret, and that the President and the Secretary of the Navy had publicly announced and reiterated that they knew absolutely nothing as to what the report of the Committee would be.

This newspaper fabrication, therefore, was done in large part deliberately and intentionally, on the part at least of many of the reporters and editors. Doubtless a few of them were "simple" enough to have been duped into believing that they were giving out real news. But what shall be said of the fitness of such "simple-minded" men to have charge of so important a matter as the conducting of a newspaper! The iniquity of some of them may also be slightly lessened by their inordinate love of the sensational, by the subordination of their moral faculties to the pressure of their imagination — a stage in human development beyond which many people have not yet passed. It is a somewhat puzzling freak of nature that so many of this class of "undeveloped" persons have got into the newspaper business, where their opportunity to do mischief is so great.

Whatever part the tyranny of sensationalism and the desire to out-do other papers may have played in the conduct of these rumor-mongers, in the office or in the field, the love of money has been the chief motive of the owners and conductors of the journals themselves. Though lying for money in ordinary business is considered in the highest degree dishonorable and disreputable and is done usually only in covert ways, this newspaper fabrication is considered by its perpetrators a shrewd and perfectly legitimate business, whose products are offered to the public in the most brazen-faced way. Alas! that so much of the public love the lying so well that

they take it down without any compunctions and without any protest!

It may be thought that the word crime is too strong to be used of this kind of iniquity. On the contrary, there is no sort of evil-doing which surpasses it in criminality. Its natural tendency is, in a case like that before us, to inflame the minds of the people and through their passionate clamors to force the government into war, whose results would be the loss and maiming of tens of thousands of lives, the breaking up of many, many homes, the spending of enormous sums of money, the creation of a deep-seated international feud, and one knows not what other perils and disasters. The fact that all these dire results are prevented by other instrumentalities from occurring does not lessen in the least the guilt of those whose deeds would otherwise have run straight to these sad results.

We are not inculcating the whole press. In the anxious days through which the country has been passing, a number of the great papers have been a mighty bulwark against hasty judgment, against inflamed passion, against hatred, against war in any shape over Cuban affairs. By their rejection of rumors, their sifting of conflicting reports, their wise and brave editorials, their calm and lofty utterances as to the true honor, dignity and mission of our great country, they have done a service which should never be forgotten. They have given us a glimpse of what the press ought to be, of what it will be, as a moral force, when it rises as a whole to the height of its great responsibilities and its great opportunities. It is a source of encouragement to have many grounds for believing that these papers have represented the sentiments and wishes of the nation as a whole.

The low, degrading, criminal sensationalism of the class of sheets of which we have been speaking can be gotten rid of only through the pressure of a strong public sentiment. Such papers must not only be strongly condemned, they must be absolutely shunned by all good men and women. All the news worth having can now be had through good, clean papers, which are at the same time rich in contents and ably edited. These must be supported, even if they cost a cent a day more. Again, the daily papers, with their great world-wide agency, the Associated Press, must be brought to feel the *extraordinary* responsibility resting upon them by the very nature of the

position which they occupy. A great newspaper, every newspaper in fact, is something more than a private business enterprise. It is a quasi-public institution. The interests of the public are so connected with it and so affected by its conduct that that portion of the public on whom rests the responsibility of social and political order has a right to say something of the manner in which it shall be managed. If every man is under moral obligation to conduct his vocation with a view to the ultimate good of the public, the newspaper man is under double obligation to do so.

Report of the Maine Court of Inquiry.

The report of the court of inquiry appointed to investigate the causes of the destruction of the battleship Maine has been awaited with anxiety. The report, which is now in, makes it certain, if it was not already certain, that this great calamity is not to lead to the still greater calamity of war. The court's findings are different from what many had supposed they would be. The accident theory, put forth at first by the government and held by many to the last, has been set aside by the report. There is, however, in the court's findings nothing of the sensational character which newspaper rumors right at the last predicted there would be. Spain and the Spaniards are not even mentioned in connection with the question of responsibility. The document is a short, cool, business-like one, and is allowed to speak for itself.

After describing the condition of the ship on the evening of the disaster, the nature of the two explosions which are found to have occurred, and the condition and position of the wreck as determined by the divers — which latter is set forth with great carefulness of detail — the court sums up its conclusions in three short statements:

"The court finds that the loss of the Maine, on the occasion named, was not in any respect due to the fault or negligence on the part of any of the officers or members of the crew of said vessel.

"In the opinion of the court the Maine was destroyed by the explosion of a submarine mine, which caused the partial explosion of two or more of her forward magazines.

"The court has been unable to obtain evidence fixing the responsibility for the destruction of the Maine upon any person or persons."

While the report does not locate the responsibility;

there are parts of it which raise a strong suspicion of a Spanish origin of the disaster. Very few thinking people have ever believed that the Spanish government or the officials at Havana were directly guilty of blowing up the ship. Many have believed, from the general circumstances of the disaster, that it was caused by individual Spaniards acting of their own motion. This belief will not be at all lessened but rather much increased by the report.

The President, in a short, admirable message, has communicated the report to Congress. It has been referred to the Committees on Foreign Affairs, and is not likely to be acted on in any way until the President gets word from the government at Madrid. In reference to what the Spanish government may be expected to do, the President says to Congress: "I have directed that the finding of the court of inquiry and the views of this government thereon be communicated to the government of her majesty, the Queen regent, and I do not permit myself to doubt that the sense of justice of the Spanish nation will dictate a course of action suggested by honor and the friendly relations of the two governments."

Such utterances as this, supposing as we do that the President has used as wise, kindly and trustful language in his communication to the Spanish government, will go a long way toward securing an immediate response answering the President's expectations. The court of inquiry and the President have certainly shown a most wise and magnanimous spirit in treating the subject. There is not a syllable in their utterances to arouse Spanish irritation.

It is possible that the Spanish government may place the report of its own court of inquiry over against that of ours and ask that the whole subject be reviewed by an international tribunal. This report holds that the ship was destroyed wholly from within. If this course should be taken by Spain, the question of responsibility will certainly go at last to a court of arbitration. If the Spanish government should take this course and ask for arbitration, our government could not in justice, and certainly would not, refuse. It is a matter eminently suitable in every way for arbitration. Spain has a right to clear herself of all responsibility for the dreadful catastrophe, if she can do it. There is reason to hope that the Spanish government will be induced by our government's self-restraint and kindness to either acknowledge responsibility in a general way, or to offer, in